

October 15, 2023

Gamers: Lessons from Zelda and Halo (1 Samuel 17:32-40)

Trust God's faithfulness for your future.

Hook – Future Memes (3min)

- Greetings (online too), connect card, notes in bulletin or app
- Talking about the future – three memes from Back to the Future.

Prayer

Zelda (10-15min)

- *History of the Game

- Released in 1986 by Shigeru Miyamoto and Takashi Tezuka – about a hero named Link trying to help Princess Zelda against the evil Ganon. The games combine action, exploration and puzzle solving, focusing on gaining new items that grant new skills. 19 games have been made, and almost 150 million units have been sold. The franchise has the most Game of the Year nominations, and several of the games are considered the greatest games of all time.
- BOTW and TOTK – open world, not focusing as much on these – I want to hit on the mechanic of most of the other games, where gaining a new item unlocks new areas.

- *Lesson – the hard work of your past will help your future.

- The Game – you gain an item, which then unlocks a new area and challenges. When you overcome those challenges, you are given a new ability. You learn how to use it, which then unlocks even more possibilities. As the game progresses, you are filled with abilities.
- In Life –
 - Babies – walking and talking – new possibilities!
 - Sports – learning the fundamentals and growing skills.
 - Work and ministry and relationships – your hard work and relational skills help you in the future.

- David's Faith and Work (1 Samuel 17)

- Background – Israelites fighting against Philistines, who keep raiding their land. Philistines have a giant named Goliath who is taunting the terrified warriors. Then comes David, delivering food from his father to his brothers. He claims he can fight the giant. Arrogance? Over-confidence? Or faith?

- 1 Samuel 17:32-40

³²“Don't worry about this Philistine,” David told Saul. “I'll go fight him!”

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³³ “Don’t be ridiculous!” Saul replied. “There’s no way you can fight this Philistine and possibly win! You’re only a boy, and he’s been a man of war since his youth.”

³⁴ But David persisted. “I have been taking care of my father’s sheep and goats,” he said. “When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. ³⁶ I have done this to both lions and bears, and I’ll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God! ³⁷ The Lord who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!”

Saul finally consented. “All right, go ahead,” he said. “And may the Lord be with you!”

³⁸ Then Saul gave David his own armor—a bronze helmet and a coat of mail. ³⁹ David put it on, strapped the sword over it, and took a step or two to see what it was like, for he had never worn such things before.

“I can’t go in these,” he protested to Saul. “I’m not used to them.” So David took them off again. ⁴⁰ He picked up five smooth stones from a stream and put them into his shepherd’s bag. Then, armed only with his shepherd’s staff and sling, he started across the valley to fight the Philistine.

- The hard work of your past will help your future.
 - Professor in college – gave his students advice about this. For his career, he put in the work – did a word-by-word analysis of the gospels in Greek, did original research on Jewish missionary work in the Second Temple period, and was intentional about forming his Supply Lines and networking. This helped him have the expertise to teach us deep information – and he was a great teacher, too.
 - Your hard work in the past is helping you now.
 - Your hard work now will help you in the future.
 - So work hard with Jesus (which also includes times of rest and fun).
- *Trust God’s faithfulness for your future.
 - David knew God was with him because he had already fought the lions, tigers, and bears (oh my!).
 - David refused Saul’s armor because they did not fit him, his fighting style, or the work he had put in.
 - David had tremendous faith in the Lord – and he combined it with hard work.
 - *He knew God would be faithful in the future because he had experienced God’s faithfulness in the past.*
 - I have killed the lion, so I can face the giants.

Halo (10-15min)

- *History of Game
 - A first-person shooter that launched in 2001 on the original Xbox console. It quickly became one of the biggest selling games of all time, launching a sequel that made \$125 million in one day. 14 games have sold a total of 81 million units as of 2021.

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- Me and Ben playing when he got old enough for shooters – good memories.
- ***Lesson – the stories of the past matter for the future.**
 - History matters – in the game, you enter a story (a war), need to pay attention. In the first game, the hero (Master Chief) almost lit the Halo ring and destroyed the galaxy because he didn't know the history. Second and third games – deeper into the history, especially of the “Covenant” (person from denomination worked for Bungie back in the day).
 - Your stories matter – your family, your church, your faith, your work.
 - Stories of hope and faithfulness
 - Mistakes too – understanding where we are, how we got here, and how to make things right
 - ***The solutions to your hurt, to being well, and to changing your life are not about focusing on the villains and the people who hurt you. The solutions are in the stories..... But stories do inform how we organize and experience the world. They tell us what it all means. Our stories become our identity and our filter for how we see, hear, feel, and act.**
 - John Delony, *Own Your Past, Change Your Future*, p.20
- ***Bible – Finding the Scroll (2 Kings 22-23)**
 - **Trust God's faithfulness for your future.**
 - Background – Josiah was 8 when he became king, complicated family history – some of the most wicked people in Judah's history. Their culture was still very much not following the Lord. When he was 26, the Bible was found (how was it lost?) – what would he do?

^{22:11} When the king heard what was written in the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes in despair. ¹² Then he gave these orders to Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Acbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the court secretary, and Asaiah the king's personal adviser: ¹³ “Go to the Temple and speak to the Lord for me and for the people and for all Judah. Inquire about the words written in this scroll that has been found. For the Lord's great anger is burning against us because our ancestors have not obeyed the words in this scroll. We have not been doing everything it says we must do.”

- **He listened.** He took the time to hear God's Word.
- **He prayed and repented.** He didn't deny or get defensive.

^{23:1} Then the king summoned all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ² And the king went up to the Temple of the Lord with all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, along with the priests and the prophets—all the people from the least to the greatest. There the king read to them the entire Book of the Covenant that had been found in the Lord's Temple. ³ The king took his place of authority beside the pillar and renewed the covenant in the Lord's presence. He pledged to obey the Lord by keeping all his commands, laws, and decrees with all his heart and soul. In this way, he confirmed all the terms of the covenant that were written in the scroll, and all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

⁴ Then the king instructed Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second rank and the Temple gatekeepers to remove from the Lord's Temple all the articles that were

used to worship Baal, Asherah, and all the powers of the heavens. The king had all these things burned outside Jerusalem on the terraces of the Kidron Valley, and he carried the ashes away to Bethel.

- **He gathered others** and let God's Word convince them.
- **He pledged to be faithful.** He made a promise rather than saying, "I'll try."
- **He followed through with action.** He moved beyond good intentions and followed through with devoted obedience.

²¹ King Josiah then issued this order to all the people: "You must celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God, as required in this Book of the Covenant."²² There had not been a Passover celebration like that since the time when the judges ruled in Israel, nor throughout all the years of the kings of Israel and Judah.²³ But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah's reign, this Passover was celebrated to the Lord in Jerusalem.

- **He celebrated the Lord with others.** He re-told the stories of the past to shape the future.

- ***Ways to remember**

- Saturate in Scripture.
 - Spend time as often as you can – more input than from any other source.
- Make memorials.
 - Ebenezers. People crossing Joran – set up stones. Cross, ring, pictures.
- Tell the tales of faith – repeatedly.
 - Know them better than movies or music or ... games.
- Persevere with God's People.
 - Refuse to go alone. God is faithful and works through His faithful people.

Punch – Faithful Through It All (3min)

- *MP slide
- Someone once described each decade of human life like this:
 - Spills, Drills, Thrills, Bills, Ills, Pills, Wills
- Life will bring a lot of changes – but the Lord is faithful through it all.
- Trust God's faithfulness for your future.
 - The hard work of your past will help you in the future.
 - Know your story and write the next chapter with Jesus and His people.
- **How can God's faithfulness in the past change how you see the future?**

Prayer

Benediction – Eph 3:17 – Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.

- Prayer Team available

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